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DEVOTED TO THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL BENEVOLENCE AND MISCELLANY OF CHASTE AND MORAL TENDENCY.

"HOW BEAUTIFUL UPON THE MOUNTAINS, ARE THE FEET OF HIM THAT BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, THAT PUBLISHETH PEACE."—Isa. lii, 7.

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Original.

### CHRISTMAS SERMON,

*Delivered in the Universalist church, in Pavillion, Gen. co. N. Y. on the evening of Dec. 24th, and in Perry, on the evening of the 25th.*

BY ALFRED PECK.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. Luke ii, 10, 11.

From time immemorial, it has been customary to commemorate by anniversary celebrations the birth of illustrious personages, their splendid achievements, and important eras and events in the history of men. But we have not met this evening to celebrate the victory of some bloody conqueror; not to applaud the character of an ambitious demagogue, nor yet to eulogize the views of an imperial tyrant; not to arouse the angry passions by fanning the flames of political faction, nor to perplex the understanding by intricate speculations on polemical theology, but we meet to join in the delightsome services of the sanctuary of our God, that we may purify the affections, rectify the heart and feast the soul, while we gratefully review some circumstances of the birth, and life, and doctrine, of the blessed Jesus, the Savior of men.

The pages of history record no circumstance of such vast importance and thrilling interest to our race, as the birth of Christ. None so much affecting the moral aspect of a world, the internal joys, the hopes and happiness of man, as the advent of the Messiah.

The birth of this spiritual king was prefigured to wise men probably of Jewish extraction, living in Arabia Felix, by signs and antecedent representations. To them there appeared an unusual light, denominated a star. Whether they believed it to be a fulfillment of the prophecy of Balaam, "there shall come a *Star* out of Jacob, and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel," and came to do homage to him who should wear the regal crown, the ensign of authority, for the exaltation and peace of their people, and the more permanent establishment of Judaism; or whether, as those eastern magi were *worshippers of fire*, they only honored it as the symbolical representation of their Deity, and seeing this extraordinary type of their God, considered it as a sign that he was about to manifest himself among men, we need not now stop to examine. They came by the direction of this heavenly guide to Bethlehem, with the humble but ardent enquiry, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews, for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. And they rejoiced with exceeding great joy;" and presented unto him their odors and their gifts. This invitation from heaven to man, which *wise men* then understood, which it is our highest wisdom to admire and contemplate, is represented to the joy-sparkling eyes of this congregation, in yonder faint similitude.*

Without any collusion, or confederation with the wise men from far; we are informed by the sacred historian, that "there were in the same country" in which Jesus was born, "Shepherds abiding in the field keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord appeared unto them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, fear not; for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior which is Christ the Lord." The Messenger of heaven having calmed their spirits, and dispelled those fears which celestial and supernatural lights under those circumstances would naturally occasion, and announced the birth of the Savior in the city of David, how soon were their fears succeeded by thrilling delight, and every fibre of their souls moved to seraphic joy; when suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men. And it came to pass as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even to Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known to us. And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it they made known the saying, which was told them concerning the child. And all they that heard it, wondered at those sayings which were told them by the shepherds."

This dress of nature which is exhibited in unfading freshness around you, not only represents the rural scenes which surrounded those shepherds when the Savior was announced; but also symbolically, that immortality and undying existence, which the light of truth and gospel of the immaculate Jesus unfolds.—These numerous lights above and around you, as a similitude, carry our minds back to that august and grand illumination of the heavens, when the angels of God's presence hailed with joy the advent of Messiah.

But whence, it may be inquired, should these signs to man, and premonitions of an event so important, appear only in the night? They were designed to show something unusual. And those brilliant splendors bursting from the portals of heaven through the deepest shades of the earth, and throwing a lustre over the rudest scenes of nature, tempered and softened as they were by reflections from the richest hues of her garniture, were doubtless typical of that superior spiritual light which should visit and bless the benighted understanding of man: adapt itself to mental vision and the eye of faith; illuminating the darkest gloom of moral night; and showing that God is glorified in the highest, only, when his *good will* shall have been accomplished in giving *peace*, the peace of heaven, to *all* his children.

We may mention another incident which happened at the birth of the innocent son of God. If not as miraculous, it is to the humane as affecting, and will be to the candid as convincing, that some extraordinary personage were then expected, and that the phenomena above related, were then known and believed. Jesus was born in the days when the cruel Herod, a parallel of whose story scarcely exists in the annals of history, reigned king in Judea. No sooner had Herod learned from the Magi, that they had seen signs which prefigured the birth of another king, than "he gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, and demanded of them where Christ should be born." The wise men were admonished to return another way, and Joseph warned to flee with Mary and the child into Egypt; so that when Herod sent forth his edict, to manifest another instance of his capricious nature and heartless inhumanity, in slaying the children of Bethlehem "from two years old and under;" Jesus was safely removed beyond the power and vengeance of the tyrant. In this we see the guardian care of Providence, and the interposition of Heaven. He was not only announced as a Savior, preceded by miraculous appearances, acknowledged by wise men, feared by kings, believed on by many by whom he was not received, but preserved through all the threatenings of opposition.

Having returned from Egypt to Judea, "his parents went every year to Jerusalem, to the feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went after the custom to the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, they returned; but the child Jesus tarried behind. But after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard were astonished at his understanding and answers." Save this instance of mental strength and precocious wisdom, exhibited at the age of twelve years, we learn but little of his life, or instructive labors, until according to the custom of the Jewish priesthood, at the age of *thirty* he entered upon his ministry.

Before we pursue farther this delightful theme, let us leave for a moment the history of our Lord, and take a brief survey of the civil and religious aspect of the world at the time of his birth.

In the commotions of the political world, conquest had succeeded conquest, revolution had succeeded revolution until the gigantic power and empire of Babylon had given place to that of the Medes and Persians. This again had

* There was a brilliant artificial star visible to the congregation, which, during the singing "Watchman tell us of the night," rose circularly to the Meridian and became stationary.

yielded to the valor of the Greeks, and Greece, so renowned for splendor in arts and arms, sunk under the dominion of Imperial Rome, who thus became mistress of all the civilized world.—Even the land of Judea, once so renowned as the kingdom over which David and Solomon had swayed the royal sceptre, had become a province of this mighty empire. With a population estimated at a hundred and twenty millions, Rome was at this time in the zenith of its extent and power. Hitherto the world was divided into small independent states differing from each other in language, manners, laws and religion. "The shock of opposing interests," and the multiplicity of conflicting views, occasioned disorder and convulsions; "and hostility and bloodshed never ceased." But when Rome in the emphatic language of the prophet Daniel, "*trod down kingdoms by their exceeding strength. and devoured the whole earth,*" "by enslaving the world they civilized it, and while they oppressed mankind, they united them together." The same laws were every where established; the same languages were understood; men approached nearer to one another in sentiments; became associated together in amity, and enjoyed reciprocal intercourse, and communication was rendered secure with remote parts of the earth.

If Rome did not adopt the gods of the countries she had conquered, her liberal policy tolerated and permitted their worship; as saith the apostle, "her foolish heart was darkened," and the objects of superstitious adoration were carried to an almost endless diversity and extreme; and mountains, rivers, the earth, the sea and the winds, even the diseases of the body, and the virtues and vices of men, received their divine honors. The fertile imagination of the Greeks had multiplied their deities to the remarkable number of thirty thousand. The Indians and Celts selected as the objects of their adoration, a set of heroes and leaders, so far from being illustrious by the memory of their virtues, they had descended to posterity, degraded, and loaded with vice and infamy. The Indians conceived that the souls of men at death entered into other bodies; whilst the Celts supposed that the bodies of the brave, would be purified by fire, and again become the receptacle of their own souls, in which they should be admitted into the society of the gods. In the objects of the Egyptian worship may be enumerated the constellations of the stars, the sun, moon, animals of almost every kind, and plants and vegetables of various descriptions. The Persians maintained the existence of one Supreme Deity, whose creation extended no farther than two subordinate deities; the one the author of all good, the other the cause of all evil. The numerous inferior gods and goddesses held up as the objects of adoration to the multitude, instead of presenting examples of excellence for their imitation, stood forth to public view as the avowed authors of the most flagrant and revolting actions and enormous crimes.

In looking upon the moral and religious state of the world, we will take a rapid glance at the gentile and oriental philosophy. Among the Greeks, the Epicureans placed the chief good in every thing in voluptuous gratification. The Academics and Sceptics made the existence of the gods an uncertainty, doubted the immortality of man, or whether virtue were to be preferred to vice. The Peripatetics viewed the Deity as wrapt in the contemplation of himself, confined to the celestial world, and unconscious of what was passing below. The Stoics supposed his will to be subordinate to the immutable decrees of fate—that it was impossible for him to reward virtue, or punish vice; and denied the immortality of man. The Platonists contemplated the Deity as totally unconnected with any material substance. The souls of men were conceived to proceed from this pre-eminent source. Yet the Deity was never viewed as infinite, Omnipotent, or Omniscient, and the direction of human affairs was committed to inferior spiritual agents or demons. The Eclectics adopted the leading sentiments of Plato, but derived their name from the privilege which they reserved to themselves of selecting from all the various systems.

In the oriental philosophy the all-wise and Omnipotent God is represented as having apportioned his dominions out into particular provinces, or districts, bestowing the administration and command over them on a number of genii, or spirits of an inferior degree, who had been his associates and assistants.

From this concise view of the Gentile world at the time of Christ's appearance on earth, the inferences to be deduced, are, it is presumed, sufficiently obvious. Mankind had been furnished with an abundant experience of what reason and philosophy in their highest state of cultivation could do, in the way of directing the human mind to the attainment of virtue and happiness. And the result was the very wisest of them were bewildered in fruitless speculations about the *chief good* and the way of obtaining it.

The Jews, only, were in possession of that revelation which taught consistent notions of the Deity. They too, had departed from the simplicity of those oracles which were their primitive guide; they had become divided in their opinions and sentiments respecting the Deity. The Pharisees, in point of numbers and influence took the precedence of all the Jewish sects. But their religion for the most part was founded in consummate hypocrisy.—They were proud, arrogant, self-righteous and avaricious; harsh and uncharitable in their judgments of others. They seemed to consult only the gratification of their passions, even at the moment they professed to be engaged in the service of their Maker, and they emphatically "made void the law through their traditions."

The leading tenet of the Sadducees was that every thing respecting man terminated with the present existence. They therefore placed the whole happiness of man in the possession of riches and sensual gratification. Thus they encouraged an inordinate love of money, a brutal insensibility to the calls of compassion, and other vices, equally pernicious and degrading.

The Essenes, another sect of the Jews, were attentive to the demands of justice in regard to others, but labored under the influence of a depressing superstition; they overlooked the duties which men owe to themselves.

As the genius of the Jewish religion fostered its thousand ceremonials, having perverted the sacred decalogue through superstition, they had made the whole duty of man to consist in the observance of their rituals. The pagan world vied with them in the number, costliness and particularity of their rites. How necessary then, in a moral point of view, was this great Teacher; to do away those useless and misleading ceremonials. and to draw their minds to the scenes and circumstances of life; and with benevolent hearts and active hands, bid them contemplate the claims of their fellow men; and thus impress upon their minds more deeply the necessity of "doing justly, loving mercy and walking humbly with God."

It was under the favorable auspices of this universal peace, at the precise time when the universal darkness and corruption of the world needed the light of life and the instruction of heaven; that, after the custom of Eastern monarch's who, when entering upon an expedition, send their harbingers before them to announce their coming and prepare for their reception, "the voice of one was heard crying in the wilderness" of Judea, "saying prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Thus heralded in obedience to the will of heaven, in fulfillment of those signs which betokened the enlightening of the world, and the joy of angels, this Prince of Peace made his entrance into our world in Bethlehem of Judea.

If we are struck with admiration at the types and premonitions of his birth, we feel no less a reverential rapture in the contemplation of his life. "Never did the world behold in the character of one man the combination of so many seemingly opposing qualities," tempered and softened into the most perfect virtue. Of humble birth, he depended alone on his wisdom and virtue for his reception of man yet he was meek and unassuming, never attempting a specious display. Though he mingled not in the scenes of gaiety and mirth, yet he manifested no churlish sullenness. "Though he abstained from licentious pleasures, he was free from ostentatious singularity." When he yielded to the customs established by his countrymen, his compliance indicated no taint of superstition. When he opposed the superstitious and deep-rooted predjudices of the age, he manifested no disposition for caviling, nor the petulance of uncharitable zeal. "With a courage superior to fear in encountering dangers to which he was exposed, he was yet passive when the accumulated and aggravated calamities were heaped upon him" by his malign foes. "There was no rashness in his fortitude," nor want of courage in his patience. Though regardless of the gay pleasures of the world around him, we see no misanthopic sourness in his deportment.—Destitute of even the common comforts of life, we yet see no monkish separation from the world, nor murmuring discontent. "Throughout the whole character, we see dignity and elevation," blended with familiarity and condescension. Our admiration is excited but our confidence is invited. Lowly and gentle, he is still dignified, and firm. To use the language of Bishop Newcome, "Never was a character at the same time so commanding and natural, so resplendent and pleasing, so amiable and venerable. There is a peculiar contrast in it, between an awful greatness, dignity and majesty, and the most conciliating loveliness, tenderness and softness."

Mark the wisdom he diplayed, the powers which he manifested, the benevolent acts which he performed; the stupendous miracles which he wrought, "healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people;" raising the dead, walking on the sea, calming the winds, and stilling the tumultous waves, with other acts too numerous to mention, but too splendid to be forgotten. Those miracles were performed at the power of his word, in an instant of time—both with, and without previous notice. They were performed on persons near, and far off, in the most open and public manner; in Gallilee and every part of Judea, and in the midst of Jerusalem, their proud capital; in cities and in villages; in private houses and in synagogues; in the streets, fields, highways and wilderness; upon Jews and Gentiles, when attended by few or surrounded by the multitudes; before the Scribes and Pharisees, his bitter enemies, and before every diversity of character. They bore the examination. None could detect the delusions of enthusiasm, or the artifices of imposture. They had no disguise, and were too public to be suspected of imposture; and many were of such a nature as to preclude the possibility of collusion. They were so palpable and certain as to extort from his most watchful foes, and subtle enemies, the acknowledgment that "this man doth many miracles; if we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him." "He seldom reasoned on the

nature of his miracles, but fully impressed with a consciousness of their truth and reality, he appealed to them with all the confidence of an upright mind." The appeal was short, simple and decisive. His miracles spake their own meaning, and carried with them their own authority. They were the fullest attestation of his divine mission that could be given. They demonstrated that "God was with him."

The doctrines which he advanced were pure and sublime, and his morals uncorrupt. Did he speak of God, it was as our Heavenly Father, and the instructions which he gave were given for the comfort of the distressed, the consolation of the afflicted, the joy of the sorrowing, the confidence of the doubting, the hope of the despairing and the enlightening of all. Did he open the recesses of the heart, and expose the passions and prejudices of men, it was to purify the affections, rectify the mistakes, expand the charities, direct the energies and guide the wandering footsteps of man into the way of peace.

"In his teaching he rescued the moral law from the false glosses imposed upon it by the scribes and pharisees;" he unfolded its universality and its spirituality, as requiring supreme love to God and unfeigned love to man; he enforced those indespensible obligations upon all men, as the rule of their correspondence with God and the source of their joy. He informs us that he did not come to destroy or abate one jot or tittle of these requirements. These he adopted as the unalterable law of his kingdom, by which to regulate the conduct and characterize his disciples.

He placed the foundation of morality, where alone true morality can be built, on the character and conduct of our Heavenly Father. His doctrines and morals are interchangeably inferential; so that a true knowledge of the one, must lead to an understanding of the other.—And there was this desirable but strange consistency, which the world had never before known, that his doctrine concerning God, reduced to practice in the scale of human life, constituted the sum and substance of his ethics. His system of ethics carried up to God, furnished those grand and cheering truths, which he taught respecting the Deity.

The doctrines of the Divine existence as set forth by this great teacher, are simple, rational, and consistent. He is presented as the creator of the world and the moral governor of men; as the kind preserver and bounteous benefactor of intelligent and sentient being; as omnipotent in power, omniscient in wisdom, omnibenignant in goodness; as worthy of our gratitude and love, our confidence and adoration. The character and care of God is illustrated in the most familiar and forcible similes, which the field of nature or the society of man exhibit. When impressing the sentiments of universal love, even toward enemies, he adds, "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven. For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain upon the just and upon the unjust;" and thus would he invite men to be perfect, according to the perfection of their divine Creator, and to be impartial in the principles which regulate human intercourse, as God is no respecter of persons.

How interesting and consoling are the reflections from the following instruction of the Savior. "Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not neither do they reap nor gather into barns; and yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" On another occasion a similar sentiment is taught. "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." What confidence in the care of the Supreme is inspired by that delightful yet truly pathetic instruction, "What man is there of you who, if his son ask bread will he give him a stone! Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him?"

Not only does God adorn the lilly and clothe the grass of the field, but sentient creatures are the objects of his care; how much more then his intelligent children, created in his moral image and stamped with the impress of the Deity. Corrupt and evil as are the family of man, the parent does not mock the supplicating cries of his child for life-sustaining food, by giving him that which is useless or positively injurious. Will our heavenly Father neglect or cruelize his children? Our Savior refuses to be called good. "None is good but one, that is God." If ye then being *evil*, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall he who is good, our Father in heaven, give good gifts to his wanting and needy children. The religion of the Savior, thus taught, was recommended and graced by his character; and so perfect was his virtue, that while it secures the love of the good, it excites the admiration of all.

Having listened to the lessons of his wisdom, and beheld a character so perfect, no wonder that the astonished officers should exclaim, "Never man spake like this man;" or his almost adoring disciple, "Thou art the Christ of God." "And his fame," says the historian, "went throughout all Syria---and there followed him great multitudes of people from Gallilee, from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan." Though his fame was so widely spread, yet he sought not the applause of men, or the popularity of the world. His modesty and virtue sought rather retirement, though he shrunk not from the gaze of men. Though poor and humble he was unawed by the frowns of the great, or the menaces of authority. Though pursued and sought by the multitude, such was his integrity of soul, stability of purpose and firmness of resolution, that he was unbribed by the offer of a kingdom, its wealth, or its dominion. Though he refused to accept of absolute power, yet unauthorized by law, and unpromoted by men, such was the commanding dignity of his mien, and respect with the people, in defence of virtue and religion, that he could assume the exercise of authority; overturn the tables of the money changers, the seats of them that sold doves, and drive from the temple, even with a scourge of small cords, those hypocrites and unprincipled speculators. When interrogated, "Who gave thee this authority?" though he refused a reply, his sagacity and wisdom shielded him from harm, and secured him from opposition.

Thus, loved by his disciples, hated by the pharisees, venerated by the multitude, and feared by his enemies, envied for his wisdom, famed for his miracles, and persecuted for his opposition to the superstitious practices of the age: applauded and execrated through life, he stands before the world as conspicuous as his annunciation by the angels, as mild and gentle as God's peace on earth, and his good will to men. Who can withhold his assent from this cloud of witnesses, of the interposition of heaven. And believing, who dare reject and disobey?

Let us still farther contemplate the doctrines of Jesus. Besides presenting the character of God in a new and more amiable light; unfolding the foundations of morality, and establishing rules for the well-being and happiness of society, he made known important truths. Truths of which the sages had never dreamed; truths which philosophy had never scanned, to inspire gratitude in the bosom of man, fill his soul with the consolations of hope, and point his wayward, wandering, care-worn spirit, to a home in heaven, and a rest with God.

Estranged as the world has ever been, deceived by its teachers, degraded by superstition, deluded by the specious display of idol worship, depraved in heart and life, and lost in sin; yet says the benevolent, compassionate and blessed Savior, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Those then, whom he seeks by his wisdom, he designs to save by the power of his grace. The nature of this salvation is sufficiently explained, whether present or future, limited or unlimited, temporal or eternal, by the angel, who brought heaven's chosen name for this chosen teacher: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins." Salvation is deliverance. It is effected by a renovation of heart and a rectification of principle; by moulding our spirits into the image of God, and implanting in our bosoms those principles of action, that piety springs up in the place of iniquity, virtue in the room of vice, and joy instead of sorrow.

This theme of exultation which inspired the tongues of angels with their anthems of "glory to God in the highest;" which caused them to descend with seraphic splendor to bring this good tidings of great joy to all people; burst forth again from the lips of Jesus, who in bearing witness to the truth, spake as man before had never spoke; "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hands." Hear it, O, ye Jews, for therein is fulfilled the declaration of your sweet singing Psalmist, and inspired prophet; "Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen, thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth, thy possession." Hear it, O, ye Gentiles, your peace and salvation are there. This rich boon, this bounteous and illimitable gift, is the demonstration that "the Father loveth the Son," that in him he is well pleased.

But mark—and mark with gratitude, the manifestation of his intention, his fidelity to his mission, and the execution of his object, to seek and save. "All that the Father giveth to me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me, And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." His verity and truth are here pledged to lose nothing—*they shall come to me, and I will in no wise cast them out.* The will of Jehovah, whose will he came to do, is, that he should raise up this gift at the last day. The doctrine of the resurrection is here taught by the embassador from on high, and that resurrection, the unalterable will of the everlasting Jehovah. Has Jesus power to accomplish this great work? Or having power, will he deceive his trust, and dishonor the court above, by failing to secure the resurrection to all that were given him? Who dare confront that numerous host of angels, the messengers from God, and declare that the tidings shall not extend to all people; or that it shall be *evil*, occasioning sorrow to many? When the truth of immortal heaven stands recorded, visible as characters of fire in the clouds, or the lustre of heaven irradiating the gloom of night—GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY WHICH SHALL BE TO ALL PEOPLE.

But what views does he advance of the resurrection? Does he subscribe to the whims of heathen philosophers, or adopt the doctrines of the pharisees? Does he maintain that the souls of men shall enter other mortal bodies on the earth, or though received into the paradise above, still have their existence modified upon the principles of the present, for the propagation of the species? This question is solved by the words of this teacher of teachers, who bore witness to the

truth. "But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more; for they are equal to the angels, and are the children of God, being children of the resurrection." Do we admit that Jesus is a teacher sent from God? Do we profess to regard his truth? Dare we then say that after the resurrection they shall be corrupt and wicked? They are, says the Saviour, *equal unto the angels.* Do we presume to declare, that they shall there die an endless death? The Savior avers, "neither can they die any more." Do we teach they shall there be children and companions of the wicked one?—The Saviour affirms, "they are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."—Will they there, live as here, unto themselves; with spirits alienated from God? Do men cease to be his children, or he their God? The Saviour teaches concerning Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, though those venerable patriarchs had departed this life, that he is still their God—God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. And it is added, ALL LIVE, and not only so, but UNTO HIM.

His errand was to seek and save that which was lost. Salvation consists in a renovation of the soul, and a purification of the moving energies of the spirit. He cannot be called the Saviour of those whom he does not save. Though this salvation is partially effected in the pure life of his genuine disciples, yet it is perfected only when being made equal unto the angels, they live *unto him.* This good tidings the angel declares pertains to all people. Well might Jesus encourage his disciples by the blessed assurance, "because I live, ye shall live also."

Such, then, are the doctrines of Jesus concerning the Deity. Such, concerning the present interest and duty, and the future destination of man. And in addition to all his instructions on the resurrection to life immortal, and as the climax of all the wonders he had taught, and stupendous miracles he wrought, he foretold, as the last demonstration he could give of his mission and his truth, that after his death, in three days he should rise again. He had power to lay his life down, and he had power to take it again.

Having glorified God in the earth, his labors were done. Hunted by his enemies, betrayed by a friend, deserted by his disciples, he was taken before the authority. There, accused by false witnesses, he suffered a mock inquisition. Though impiously clad in the robes of royalty, contemptuously crowned with thorns, and saluted in derision, no imprecation bursts from his lips. With meekness and patience, he endured the buffetings of his enemies. At length the day arrived in which he must suffer death.—Smote by soldiers, insulted by the populace, and treated as a malefactor, he was nailed to the cruel wood. But still his mildness of spirit forsook him not while life remained. That benevolence which prompted him to assiduity and persevering labors of love, for the good of all, burst forth in the closing scene of life, when he appeals to heaven in his last pathetic address, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." "Socrates died like a philosopher, Jesus Christ like a God."

At his birth, night was turned to day. At his death, day was turned to night. At his birth, the earth resounded with the songs of rapture. At his death, it was convulsed by the rumble of earthquakes and the sounds of dissolution. Behold the temple, that house of prayer which in his life was cleansed by his authority, at his death its veil was rent in twain from the top to the bottom.

Though indebted to charity for a grave, still the malice of his enemies pursued him beyond life, and guarded his sepulchre by a band of soldiers to prevent, what they feared would be the event, the impression on the public mind, that Jesus was risen, and his word fulfilled. But the eventful day approaches.

"Angels, roll the stone away,
Death give up thy mighty prey;
See! He rises from the tomb,
Shining in immortal bloom.

'Tis the Savior! angels, raise
Your triumphant song of praise;
Let the heaven's remotest bound
Hear the joy-inspiring sound.

Now, ye saints, lift up your eyes,
Now to glory see him rise;
Mark his progress through the sky,
To the radiant world on high.

Heaven displays her crystal gate;
Enter in thy royal state;
King of glory, mount thy throne,
'Tis thy Father's and thy own.

Praise him all ye heavenly choirs,
Strike with awe your golden lyres;
Shout, O earth, in rapt'rous song,
Let the strains be loud and strong.

To the listening nations tell,
Sin o'erthrown and vanquished hell.
Where is death's once dreaded king?
Where, O monster, is thy sting?"

Such are a few brief incidents of the birth, life, labors, and death of the founder of our holy religion, and the author of eternal salvation.—Who that understands his history, or scans his pretensions, does not discover that the wisdom of heaven, and the power of the Most High animated his spirit; was manifest in his actions, and that his words, were the words of truth and soberness. Kind and humane to his fellow men, sincere and unaffected in his devotions, his own holy life is the best exemplification and practical comment upon his pure and undefiled religion. Let the world then examine his history, and canvass his claims. And when they see all that we have spoken, all that is recorded of him, transpire in an age enlightened, and among a people far advanced in knowledge; surrounded by friends and enemies, in the midst of the multitude, and in every part of Judea; sometimes even coming in collision with the authority; then let people say whether his history is fabulous, or his pretensions deceptive.

See his grave surrounded by a band of Roman soldiers, whose life or death depended upon their fidelity; yet after his resurrection those soldiers suborned by enemies, to bare false witness, which so implicated themselves and their faithfulness, as to demand the interposition of the populace to screen them from the vengeance of custom and the penalty of the law; and then say whether the facts were not then known, and would not then have been investigated with care. Then contemplate Jesus mingling with his friends, and known of them as a man knows his brother, and seen by above five hundred persons, and say whether the testimony is not ample.—With the zeal and personal friendship of disciples and followers on the one hand, and his persecutors through life, and virulent opposers after death, on the other, would not the subject have been minutely examined and perfectly understood? And if the truth when understood, was *that Jesus did not rise*, would not the historians of that age, transmit the base pretension, and the gross imposture to posterity? But none ever dared confront by the presentation of facts, the testimony of his apostles, "*The Lord is risen indeed!*" He burst the bars of the tomb as a confirmation of his divine mission, a verification of his word and a demonstration of his of doctrine; as an assurance to mortals of victory over death, and of life beyond the grave.

Compare then in your own minds, the system of the religion of Christ, with the systems taught by heathen philosophers and priests. While in them we discover,

"Gods changeful, partial, passionate, unjust;
Whose attributes are rage, revenge and lust;"

in his we see a God of perfect goodness and love; the same yesterday, to day, and forever. While whith them, morality was but a name, and found but few advocates and patrons; while even where it was preceptively taught, it was partial and corrupt, or belied in their practice, with Jesus it was love—universal love, carried out into all the business and various relationships of life, for the promotion of peace and happiness. And his life was a practical illustration of his precepts. While with them the gloom of perpetual night hangs over the mortality of man, and no ray reveals aught beyond the tomb, it is in Jesus alone that we behold eternity's ineffable glories irradiate and beam through the darkness of time, and the refulgent halo of immortality brighten around the horrors of the grave. While the light of nature has been but a feeble flickering meteor in the midst of surrounding darkness that has only "dazzled to blind," it is in divine revelation we discover a radiance and a glory whose effulgent blaze shines through the dark valley of the shadow of death, and brings to light imperishable life and undying joy in a world on high.

What, O what is death to that mind which adopts the religion of Christ and considers eternity as the career of its existence? What are the vicissitudes of life to him who anticipates a state of immutable and endless felicity? The loss of friends is comparatively light to that heart which reposes in the conviction that death shall be swallowed up of life, and that they shall quickly rejoin them in a union more tender, intimate and permanent; where separation, sighs, and tears are no more. But enough, enough. We are satisfied. Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace. Our eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared before the face of all people.

And now to conclude. To that excellent choir who have on this occasion rejoiced our hearts with the harmony of their voices and their songs of praise, we would tender the thanks of this congregation. Go on, then, beloved brethren and sisters. Sing the praises of Emmanuel with the spirit and the understanding, also, until your own hearts, deeply imbued with the principles of his religion, shall drink in the consolations of the spirit, and your confiding souls rest in that hope whose joys are unspeakable and full of glory.

And to this whole congregation—how ought we to be grateful unto heaven that we are so highly favored. O, then, let us honor Jesus, as the Son and Sent of God. Let us receive his precepts to our bosoms as the spring of our actions, and the directory of our lives. Let our intercourse be regulated upon the principles of his love, and that intercourse tell to the world that we are Christians. And while we contemplate his miracles with admiration, let us embrace his doctrines with the obedience of faith. Then shall hope buoy us above the afflictions and troubles incident to humanity. Then shall we view death as the harbinger of immortal life, and in the prospects of the gospel and faith of Jesus, rejoice in the belief of man's ultimate passport from earth's imperfections, to a paradise of joy. Amen.

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Pleasure and pain, beauty and deformity, good and evil, seemed to me every where interwoven; and one with another made, I thought, a pretty mixture, agreeable enough in the main. 'Twas the same, I fancied, as in some of those rich stuffs, where the flowers and the ground were oddly put together, with such irregular work and contrary colors as looked ill in the pattern, but mighty natural and well in the piece.

MESSENGER & UNIVERSALIST.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1835.

### ORCHARD-ST. CHURCH.

The regular Lecture in this Church for Sunday (to morrow) evening, will be postponed, in consequence of the Communion Service, which will take place on that evening.

### AN EXCHANGE.

Brs. C. F. Le Fevre and A. C. Thomas will exchange desks on Sunday, 22d inst. Feb. (two weeks from to morrow.) It is expected that Br. Le Fevre will favor our Philadelphia friends with his "reasons" for renouncing Partialism and embracing Universalism, having been several years a preacher of the Limitarian doctrines.

### A DIFFICULTY.

We have been pondering some days upon a difficulty, which to us appears a serious one, and for the life of us we cannot see how we are to get along with it, without the aid some of our patrons. We have turned it over, and backwards, and forwards, and in fact all ways—have examined it closely in all its bearings, and with all that we can do, it still resolves itself into this definite point—*Some of our patrons* MUST *help us*, or ——

The difficulty is this—in the prosecution of our business, as is usually the case with those doing business, we have incurred debts, for materials and labor, and indeed something to *live* on, and the consequence is, as any one may naturally see, those debts must be paid; and for fear that our memory might be somewhat treacherous in the case, we have been favored with sundry little notes which business persons, at least, are familiar with, saying, "*Your note*," &c. We have just been examining the ominous parcel. In one we are politely told that there is $250, due Feb. 18, $200 Feb. 19, another sum March 11, and so on at different times, making about $1500 which we must pay between this and April, besides our regular weekly expenses. And the most serious part of the whole difficulty is, that we have little on hand to meet it. The amount is *small*, we know, compared with some, but our means are *small*, and our business is *small*, and the sum is therefore as troublesome to us, as if it were *ten times as much*, with a corresponding extent of business.

Reader, is it not a serious dilemma? Who will aid us in extricating ourselves from it? We have had our eye upon near *two thousand dollars* of our hard earnings—we have thought how convenient it would be at this time, were it in our possession—we have at times almost imagined that our delinquent subscribers had fully realized our troubles, and had promptly and honorably marched up in a body and paid their dues—it was an exhilarating sight—and we involuntarily placed our hand in our pocket to draw out the wished for treasure, that we might stop the clamor of the little obtrusive things before us, but alas, for our pocket, it was as empty as before we commenced *dreaming!*

Who, we again ask, will aid us in these our difficulties? There are numbers on our list now taking the paper who have not paid their subscriptions to the 3d vol. Will they not remember us speedily, and remit for both volumes together, particularly as *we* have waited so long for the third? We are sure it would be promptly furnished to our hands, (if they are friends indeed,) could they but realize for only a short time the trouble we have in serving them up a weekly repast, while perplexed with the unpleasant visitors of which we have been remarking. Shall we be disappointed in them? No, no—we trust not. The amount can, in most cases, be sent through Post Masters, if no other opportunity offers.

To those who have punctually remitted, from time to time, our warmest thanks are due. P.

### DIVINE PENALTY.

All christians are agreed that God has placed man under a moral law, and all are likewise agreed that every moral law is accompanied with a penalty. In the design of the annexed penalty there is also a similar agreement. It is simply to support the law. So far there is the greatest unanimity.

But when we come to the matter of fact and inquire what the penalty is which God has actually annexed to his law, there immediately arises a difference of opinion. One party asserts that the penalty is nothing less than *endless misery in hell*. Another contends that it is a *temporary*, but just and equitable punishment, graduated by infinite wisdom according to the turpitude of every individual sin. To us this appears not only reasonable, but also in accordance with the whole tenor of the sacred Scriptures; while the former opinion is beset with difficulties. With our readers' permission we will mention two or three.

1. If endless misery be the penalty of the Divine law, then there is no difference in the magnitude of sins. An evil thought, an idle word, a trifling wrong action, is, in the judgment of God, deserving the same eternity of punishment, as the most aggravated crime. Not only so, but the child which has sinned but once, is liable to the same penalty as the high-handed violater of God's law who has grown gray in the perpetration of the blackest deeds. Such an idea is shocking to all our feelings, as well as destructive to our best conceptions of the wisdom and *justice* of God.

2. There is another difficulty. If endless misery was the penalty of the Divine law, its infliction instead of supporting the law would utterly subvert it. Let us demonstrate this position. It will not be denied that to love God with all the heart, and our neighbor as ourselves, is what the law requires. The design of the penalty is to support these claims of the law. Will endless misery accomplish this object? By no means. The damned, it is generally believed, instead of loving God and their fellows, will make it their business to *curse and blaspheme forever*. And instead of becoming better under their punishment they will grow worse and worse. So far, then, from supporting the law, or bringing the transgressor to obey its requirements, or even preventing him from openly and habitually disobeying it, *the only effect* of the penalty is to confirm the sinner in his sins and perpetuate transgression world without end.

Can this be the work of God? What should we think of our Legislature, if in enacting laws against *theft*, the penalty should be such as would not prevent the thief from stealing, but on the contrary place him in circumstances where necessity would compel him, or opportunity make it convenient for him to steal perpetually? Or in the case of *murder*, what should we think, if the penalty of the law, so far from preventing the repetition of the crime by the same individual, should in its execution, provoke the same hand, and arm it with a dagger to perpetrate ten thousand murdes? Would not every man unhesitatingly pronounce the Legislature mad? But how does this supposition differ from the popular representation of the Divine government? God has made us subject to a law. We violate the law, and the penalty must be inflicted. But will the infliction of the penalty cause us to cease sinning and to return to obedience. Not at all. Such was not the design of the Lawgiver. His only object was to place us in circumstances, where we could not do otherwise than sin without interruption—where repentance could never be exercised, or would be utterly unaviling—and where ever-increasing torments should perpetually incite us to bolder and more awful blasphemies. What is most astonishing is that men possessing sound minds, and christian feelings, can declare such a penalty *just*; and its infliction *necessary* for the *honor* and *glory of God!* As if the glory of God could be advanced by the endless blasphemies of unnumbered millions of his own intellectual offspring!!

3. But there is one difficulty more which to us seems greater than either of the preceding, formidable as they really are. It is this. The penalty of endless misery is no where mentioned or alluded to in the volume of divine truth. That we are not mistaken in this assertion, will appear from the great difficulty which the advocates of such a penalty meet with in finding it there. Sould we go to a well instructed jurist and inquire, What is the penalty of the law against murder, or arson, or burglary? Would he not be able to refer us to it in the Statute-book? And if he should affirm that it was death, or imprisonment for a longer or shorter period, would it not be easy for him to prove the declaration by an appeal to the very law itself, and the express language of the Legislature? But who can place his finger on the passage of the inspired word which threatens endless misery as the penalty of the Divine law? No one. If such a penalty could be found it must necessarily occur in connexion with the first command which God imposed on our original parents. "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; *for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*" But is endlesss misery threatened here? Is any thing said about hell and eternity? We cannot help quoting here a remark of Locke. "By *death* some understand *endless torments in hell fire*—but it seems a strange way of understanding a law (which requires the plainest and directest words) that by *death* should be meant *eternal life in misery*. Can any one suppose, by a law, which says *for felony thou shalt surely die*—not that he should lose his life but be kept alive in perpetual and exquisite torments? And would any one think himself fairly dealt with that was so used."—*Reasonableness of Christianity*, vol. ii, p. 508.

With these several difficulties before us, we ask every candid mind if endless misery can be the penalty of the Divine Law? S.

### A SUPPOSITION.

Suppose the Emperor of China should send to the United States for twelve Christian missionaries, without addressing his message to any particular Church, and the churches should call a convention, and after solemn deliberation and prayer, should agree to send one minister from each of the following denominations, viz. Catholic, Protestant Episcopal, Episcopal Methodist, Moravian, Lutheran, Dutch Reformed, Presbyterian, Congregational, General and Particular Baptist, Quaker and Unitarian; and it should so happen that a rich merchant should offer them a free passage, provided they would all sail in the same vessel, and they should see fit to accept of his offer—what would be the probable result?

During their long and dangerous voyage how would they spend their time? Would each one in his turn agree to state his sentiments unequivocally, and attempt to prove that he was right and the rest were wrong? How would they endure that? The Catholic could not burn the heretics there without burning himself, and they would not cast him overboard for the credit of their mission. The Protestant Episcopalian would not love to talk of schism in the presence of the son of Rome. The Baptist would hardly like to insist on immersion where so many were in favor of sprinkling, and especially he would not mention close communion at such a time as that; nor would the Quaker be likely to complain of priestcraft among so many priests. In such a case silence might be wisdom, but a silent meeting would not compose their differences. What then must be done? Alas for the Christian world! Who shall answer the question? But suppose after three months' fierce and fiery debate, or sullen silence, they should at last agree to differ, and fall on a plan to divide China into twelve cantons, how would they answer the emperor and his court, if required to give a statement of their views; and what would he and his great men think of them and the Christian community when he found that they could not agree among themselves? STELLA.

*** The editors of the Christian Advocate and Journal are desired to answer this, or print it as it is, and request other editors to publish it for the benefit of the christian world.

We think the above question susceptible of a Christian, not to say a *satisfactory* answer; but we choose for the present at least, that it should be referred to the Christian public.—EDS. CHRIST. ADV.

We copy the foregoing from the Christian Advocate and Journal, the Methodist paper of this city. The last paragraph is from the pen of the editors of the Advocate and Journal. They use little ceremony in disposing of the "Supposition" of their correspondent. For ourselves we should like to see the "*christian answer*," of which they speak.—Still we think it is well that it should also be "referred to the christian public," and we would, too, that it might be deeply pondered by that public.

For years there have been the most active exertions among professed christians to carry the gospel to the heathen. Millions of dollars have been drawn from the community for this purpose, and yet there has scarcely been the period since these missionary efforts commenced, in which the heathen might not have referred the christian missionaries back to their own land, with this significant injunction—go, harmonize the discordant sects and parties among yourselves, let us see the fruits of your profession of which you boast—joy, peace, long suffering and forbearance one toward another—among your own people, and then we will think of listening seriously to you and comparing your doctrine with our own.

We do not view this as an objection to christianity. It is only an evidence that the zeal for *party success* in the different denominations has led them away from the simplicity of the gospel of Christ. Let them return to that—let us convert the heathen in our own land, and when all have become imbued with the spirit of our divine master, then can we go forward with some share of consistency, with unanimity and power, in the great and laudable work of carrying the knowledge and blessings of the gospel to those now ignorant of them. And what is still better, our *example* will exert a much greater influence than our *precepts* possibly can now.

We appeal to the candid of all sects, whether it is not idle to exhaust our funds and labor *abroad*, in overcoming heathenism, when we have so much of it, or that which is as bad, wholly overlooked at *home*. It is an old saying, "Let charity *begin* at home, but let it not *stay* there." This, however, does not countenance the idea of charity's *beginning* abroad. It is equally as important that it should BEGIN *at home*, as that it should *flow abroad*. Let christians show the true power of christianity in their unanimity of feeling, and virtuous practices, and they need not be troubled at what the "emperor of China," or any other "great men" of the world may think of them. P.

## REV. HORATIO FOOTE.

In an editorial article in the Evangelist, (the New School paper,) of January 10th, we found it stated that a Protracted Meeting was in progress in Dr. Lansing's Church, at which Mr. Foote was officiating. From the celebrity of this man, and the moral tornadoes which have usually followed in his train, we certainly had reason to expect some "mighty works" as the result of his visit to our wicked city. Especially so, from the large professions which he himself made in some of his early lectures. We have attentively watched the "Evangelist," (the organ of all these high pressure measures in this region,) since its announcement of Mr. Foote's presence, for some report of his astonishing labors in re-building "the walls of Jerusalem," but we have not as yet found the least allusion to him since the first notice. Three or four weeks have passed, and no proclamation has been made of converts by hundreds and almost thousands. This was not the manner, while Mr. F. was laboring in Berkshire county, Mass.

The total silence of the "Evangelist" is the more singular, as we have understood that Mr. Foote has closed his labors here, having given his Farewell Discourse on the evening of Sunday, the 25th ultimo. There is certainly something out of order here, and if we are to be allowed the inalienable privilege of a *yankee*, we should "*guess*" that Mr. Foote's "protracted efforts" had resulted in an almost total failure, or that he had unfortunately for himself incurred the displeasure of the "powers that be," at the Chapel.

We have understood from many who attended his meetings that he was a "bold declaimer," and frequently in brandishing his "unruly" weapon—the tongue—he would hit friends as well as foes. At one time, speaking of the clergy in this city, we are told, he estimated the number at about 200. One hundred of these he said, lolled in their easy chairs, without attemping to open their mouths for the Lord. Nearly the whole of the remainder, it was true, pretended to labor in the Gospel field, but it was after all a miserable "pretence"! "Why they have a stack of sermons so high," suiting the action to the words, "which they have turned over and over," says he, "and if perchance, while *pretending* to preach, they get their eyes half raised to heaven, they lose the thread of their story, and down they go again to their notes. Such a man (he continues) has never experienced the saving grace of God!" A pretty severe judgment and one not very palatable we should think, to most of his limitarian friends. But if they *will* put the reins into the hands of a real Jehu, they must not complain of the speed with which he drives.

In connexion with his remarks on the clergy, Mr. F. stated that he had come here to throw himself, body and soul, into the work of saving sinners. He had surveyed the city, and resolved, like Nehemiah of old, on laboring with all his might, "fifty and two days," to re-build the walls of Jerusalem—yea, *three hundred and sixty five*, if it were necessary. He *has* labored, night and day, for *sixteen days*, (so we understand,) and as before stated, gave his Farewell on Sabbath evening, week, having piled up *sixteen* blocks upon his wall; or in other words, having succeeded in driving into a profession of his views, the enormous number of sixteen *persons* in *sixteen days*, counting all descriptions, old and young!

We wonder not that Mr. F. became discouraged in view of such progress. Particularly when considered along with his view of the piety of this city. Estimating the population at about 200,000, he thought there might be 18,000 nominal christians, but even among these he doubted if there could be found *five hundred real christians!* Alas, for the good city of Gotham, in Mr. F.'s opinion!! and alas, too, for Mr. F.'s hope of a *completion* of his labors; for in this ratio, it would take at least *two hundred thousand* days labor to place the cap-stone on his wall! A period of time which he could hardly hope to be awarded him for a sojourn here. We wonder not, therefore, that he is discouraged, and that he should give up the city in despair.

During his labors here Mr. F. has bestowed a pretty good share of attention upon universalism. In scarcely a discourse that we have heard from, have they been entirely neglected. Some were specially devoted to them. Yet our friends abroad will learn, by the weekly visits of the Messenger, that they have not been wholly annihilated.—Indeed we have heard of no serious mis-hap to any one of them. And what is of vastly more importance than all the rest, and for which we feel devoutly thankful, we have heard of no cases of *insanity* and *suicide* among his deluded followers, and we could hope that a similar result might attend him wherever he goes.

We have felt that so important an embassy as one for the conversion of this great metropolis demanded some notice. The ambassador at least was entitled to some attention.—We have anxiously looked to the "Evangelist," as before intimated, for the performance of this duty, but have been disappointed, and rather than allow him to depart entirely "unhonored and unsung," we have volunteered this friendly notice of his professions, his labors, and their results.

Reader, are you disposed to complain of the *manner* of this notice? If you could have been present, and heard and witnessed some of his wild and extravagant language and actions, seen his strong egotistical manner, and real dramatic performances, you would say not another word. The serious defender of religion, though we might regard him under erroneous views, we should endeavor to respect for his frankness and candor; but he who prowls about our country like a travelling mountebank—who manifests the most consummate egotism—who proscribes without ceremony even all his co-workers, and presents his own dear self to the world as combining and comprehending all the zeal, all the piety, and all the religious truth that ever existed, we look upon as entitled to little respect and consideration from any one. P.

## NEWARK DISCUSSION.

A friend has put into our hand a pamphlet of 12 pages, entitled "A true picture of Universalism, as drawn by the Rev. I. D. Williamson in the Newark Discussion, with remarks upon it by his Opponent. Reported for the Methodist Committee." After giving the above title, it is hardly necessary for us to say that it is brought out by Mr. Reynolds.

It is not our business, or intention, to engage in Br. Williamson's defence—he can doubtless defend himself, if the thing is deemed worthy of notice by him. Beside, we were not present at the Discussion, and cannot say how faithfully he is reported. But this much we can say, that with many years experience in the doctrine, we have never known any such Universalism, as the reporter, or *writer*, of this pamphlet has brought to public view. And we are assured by those who were present that it is a base misrepresentation even of Br. Williamson's remarks.

From what has appeared in our columns recently, our opinion of the writer must be well understood. Were any thing farther needed to destroy all confidence, this last act would be sufficient. To hold a discussion with a person—then engage to write out that discussion regularly for publication, and before it is fairly commenced, to begin a course of Lectures on the subject in the absence of his opposer—and still farther, to attempt to forestall public opinion by thrusting before that public a disjointed statement of some part of the discussion, highly caricatured withal, is abundant evidence that he who could do it must be devoid of all principle.

We have little doubt in our own mind that the appearance of the pamphlet is owing to our exposure of his duplicity. Had the Messenger have remained silent, he would undoubtedly have continued his fawning, flattering course, and in the end have been ready to declare for the side which would have promised him, all things considered, the most distinction. He would by that time have "*formed a character*," that would have admirably fitted him for some other similar feat to those he has been enacting for the few years past. For otherwise, he could not have pursued the course he has. If he was guided by principle, he never could have so manifestly violated his arrangments with Br. Williamson in the debate. If we had done him injustice, Br. W. of course could be in no wise answerable for our acts. *He* had ever treated him with all possible kindness. But no—the very moment we lifted the curtain, and exposed his double-dealing to public view, his plans were all thwarted, and as there was little prospect of gaining more in that quarter, out he comes with a bitter tirade against the whole denomination. Notwithstanding he has had his "revolving eye" on "some opening to greater usefulness in a field, the scenery of which has long charmed" his "soul," *that* "field," has been suddenly overcast. Every thing which but a moment since presented the most lovely and inviting appearance, now puts on the most hideous and revolting deformity, (to him,)—and why? merely, respected reader, because we ventured to lift the veil and thereby disturb him in his favorite "*statu quo*," !! We pity the man who can thus foolishly sacrifice himself, when his talents, prudently directed, might win him honor and respect equal to what any human being should ever presume to aspire after.

We envy not the author of the pamphlet any of the feelings he is doomed, by his own folly, to carry about with him, or any of the advantage he may propose to himself, in the publication before us. Whoever takes the trouble to acquaint himself with Universalism will detect the slanderous efforts at once, and place a just estimate on the motives of the author. P.

Original.

## THE CONTRAST.--No. 3.

Many of the most respectable orthodox commentators agree in the opinion that the popular sentiment concerning "hell" is not revealed in the Old Testament. The more modern critics and divines are of the opinion that the doctrine of an "eternal hell" is clearly and fully sustained in the "gospel of the blessed God." It is however a singular fact that there are clergyman of high standing scattered over the country who seemingly consider this doctrine among the "non-essentials" in religious matters. Their creed, it is true, contains the doctrine, and they themselves may sometimes drop a word on the subject of danger in delay, and the importance of fleeing from "impending wrath;" just enough to calm any suspicions that might arise that they were becoming too *liberal*. If they were to speak of wrath, or hell and damnation, in tones calculated to arouse the feelings, to stir up the sleeping fears, and to produce "an excitement," they would apprehend *danger* to their reputation; they would fear that a righteous and sensible community would record their names among such worthies as Burchard, Foote, Sprague, and other fiery zealots, whose doings are reprobated in strong terms by the more staid and peaceable portion of Christendom. Fifty years ago these same clergymen who are denouncing modern revivals as a "serious evil," as "religious tornadoes," &c. might have *thundered* the doctrine of hell-torments into the ears of their hearers, in the form of "infant damnation," or "absolute election," but *now* the word hell occurs in a sermon as an ordinary term, it brings little or no terror, it does not convulse the animal frame or make the soul quake with horrible dismay, nor does the minister *intend* that this shall be the effect; he cannot bear the idea of "new measures," "modern schemes," which are always succeeded by "*re-action*," &c.

This reserve, this manifest difference in the tone of modern preaching, from that of former days, ought to have its weight with every reflecting mind. If there is an "eternal hell" in the domains of Jehovah, and the truth of it is

revealed in the gospel of our blessed Lord, it ought to be preached in all its "tremendous realities." Some *do* preach as though they really believed that this is the case, and they who pretend to believe the doctrine, but only now and then speak of it, should be the last to raise the cry of "intemperate zeal, fanaticism, religious frenzy," &c. They wish to be thought "evangelical," and they consider themselves as such, just so far as they refrain from adopting the strange schemes of "wild revivalists," and if we may judge of the future, by the transitions of the past, the time is not far distant when there will be a sensible *increase* of "evangelical" preaching. I mean by this that the doctrine of an "endless hell" will be as little thought of, as a doctrine of divine revelation, and as little considered a part of the gospel of peace and salvation, as it was in the days of Jesus and his apostles.

It is contended that Christ taught this fearful truth; that some souls will suffer an eternal separation from God and happiness. This truth it is supposed is set forth in such expressions as "hell, hell-fire, the fire that shall not be quenched," &c. When a minister speaks of *hell*, he is understood to mean a place of endless misery. But did our Savior intend to be understood so? We have space at present to notice only two or three instances. In Matt. v, 22, we read, "But I say unto you that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment, &c. but whosoever shall say thou fool, shall be in danger of hell-fire."

Dr. A. Clarke in his commentary has the following on the above passage: "Our Lord here alludes to the valley of the son of Hinnom. This place was near Jerusalem and had been formerly used for those abominable sacrifices which the idolatrous Jews had caused their children to pass through the fire to Molech. See 2 Kings, xxiii, 10, Jer. vii, 31, 32. Now proportioned to these *three* offences, (named in the text,) were *three* different degrees of punishment, each exceeding the other in its severity, as the offences exceeded each other in their different degrees of guilt. 1st. The *judgment*, the council of twenty-three which could inflict the punishment of *strangling*. 2d. The Sanhedrim, or great council which could inflict the punishment of stoning. And 3d, the being *burnt alive*, in the valley of the Son of Hinnom. This appears to be the meaning of our Lord." Here it will be perceived that the learned Dr. is opposed to the common notion respecting this passage. He does not say that the Saviour alluded to an "endless hell," of fire in the future state. And how can any one suppose that our Lord would affix the fearful penally of *endless torments* to the crime of saying "thou fool."

Dr. Lightfoot remarks on the above passage, thus: "Besides the reference to the valley of Hinnom, he [Christ] seems to refer to that penalty used by the Sanhedrim, of *burning*; the most bitter death that they used to put men to, the manner of which was thus:—They set the malefactor in a dung-hill up to the knees; and they put a towel about his neck, and one pulled one way and another the opposite, till by thus strangling him, they forced him to open his mouth. Then they poured boiling lead into his mouth, which went down into his belly, and so burnt his bowels." This is the hell-fire which these two learned Doctors affirm was alluded to by our Lord, and there are other commentators of equal celebrity, who are of the same opinion. In Matt. x, 28, our Savior uses this word "hell." Also in Luke xii, 5, and in other places, to *all* which, the above observations apply with the same force as to the one under consideration.—It is plain then that the blessed Teacher did not use the word "hell," and "hell-fire," to signify endless torments in the future state. B. B. H.

Original.

## OUR BELIEF---No. 4.

God is Love, 1 John iv, 16.

We believe that God, the Creator and Governor of the world, IS LOVE. This is his nature and essence, nay, it *is God himself*. All that we understand by the *several* attributes that are ascribed to the Supreme Being, is the *different* ways in which he manifests himself, or the *different* means which he employs, under *different* circumstances, for the accomplishment of his will. When he finds it necessary or expedient to chastise man in consequence of his wickedness, it is called the exercise of his *justice*. When he extends relief to his needy and suffering creatures, it is called a display of his mercy. And so with all his other attributes.—They all diverge from one common centre—emanate from one grand source—are designed to operate on the same creatures—are controlled by the same hand—and therefore all of *the same nature*. Tha several attributes of God may be fitly compared to a number of streams all flowing from the same fountain. They all derive their *nature* from the source whence they proceed. And however different their appearances and courses may be, and by whatever names they may be designated, it is certain that they are all *one and the same thing*. God is a great and immeasurable Fountain of Love. All that *flows from him*, therefore, no matter what it may be called, or what may be the *apparent* effects produced by its operations, it is self-evident that it must necessarily partake of the *nature* of the Fountain from which it emanates. To suppose that any thing could possibly proceed *from God* that is in the smallest degree *incompatible* with his *nature*, is no greater absurdity than to suppose that he is wise to-day and simple to-morrow.

The Scripture writers, in ascribing *human passions* to the Deity, must be understood as accommodating their language to the weaknesses of man, and not as *really meaning* that *hateful passions* find an abiding place in the bosom of that Being who IS LOVE. But we shall consider this point more fully in a future No.

The Scriptures, besides declaring that "God is Love," assure us that he is "a consuming fire," "the fountain of living waters," "the Father of mercies," ect. Between these several appellations there is a perfect concord. *God is a consuming fire of love.* He will burn till all that is opposed to his nature and will, shall be *consumed*, and all the *children of his mercies* be blessed in the participation of the life-giving *waters* of salvation.

A Being whose nature is Love, is worthy of our homage and adoration. And all who see him as he is, and "understand and know him," will delight in his service, submissively bow to his sovereign authority, and acknowledge him "King of kings and Lord of lords." A. M.

*New-London, Conn.*

## REV. C. F. LE FEVRE,

Mr. Silas Goddard, of Stukely, L. C. writes us word that there is a report in circulation in that place, (which is said to have been started by a letter from Albany, N. Y.) that Rev. C. F. Le Fevre held a discussion last fall in Albany, with a Methodist minister,—that the Methodist *run him out, put him down*, and caused him to confess his errors, and he became converted to the doctrine of endless misery.

How is this Br. Le Fevre,—have you gone over to the orthodox? Let us hear from you on this matter.

We copy the foregoing from the Trumpet of last week. We have not had an opportunity to see Br. LeFevre, (before our paper goes to press this week,) that he might answer for himself at this time; so we briefly state in contradiction of the above, that he is very far from being "*run out*," or "*put down*;" and we hardly think he will be accused of being a convert to the doctrine of endless misery by the numerous congregation which attends his preaching. We presume, however, he will answer for himself in our next. P.

## NEW PUBLICATIONS.

We acknowledge the receipt of the first No. of a new paper just commenced in New Orleans, entitled the "Louisiana Recorder," devoted to the Arts and Sciences, Literature and Religion, the Prospectus of which we inserted some weeks since. The "Recorder" is conducted by an Association of Gentlemen, for the benefit of the Orphan Asylum, in New Orleans. It is published weekly on a royal sheet, quarto form, at $5 per ann. in advance. We wish the conductors every success in advancing the different objects contemplated in their plan.

We have likewise before us the first No. of a new publication, styled the "Religious Magazine," a work to be issued in monthly Nos of 64 pages each, imperial octavo, at $3 per annum. We perceive it is to be edited by ORIGEN BACHELOR, the original projector of the "Family Magazine," (a valuable publication, by the way,) and formerly editor of the "Christian Soldier," a work published at Boston, and most virulently opposed to Universalism, and which was sometime since discontinued, for want of patronage.

The work before us professes to be designed for general circulation, and to give "a kind of system of religious knowledge."

It can be readily seen what kind of "system of religious knowledge" will be given, and how thoroughly orthodox the whole will be, from an extract which we make from an article, in its very outset, on "Future Retribution." After dealing liberally in the hackneyed and worn out sayings of the celebrated negro preacher, Lemuel Haynes, in allusion to those who "not only deny eternal, but all future punishment," he sums up as follows:

"They send the wordling to a heaven of spirituality, the knave to a heaven of honesty, the drunkard to a heaven of temperance, the blasphemer to a heaven of praise! They virtually say, that he that *believeth not* shall be saved;—that the *impure* in heart shall see God; that the blasphemer against the *Holy Ghost* shall be forgiven; and that all those shall inherit the kingdom of God who, the Bible expressly declares, shall not inherit it."

We can hardly persuade ourselves that the editor has not had opportunities to know Universalism better than to make such representations of it as the above. It is too much in character with the spirit of the "Christian Soldier." We have only to add, that if the editor wishes to write with any prospect of advantage to Universalists, he must do it with more truth and candor than what appears on the face of the article to which we allude.

We acknowledge also the receipt of the first No. of a valuable little work for children, entitled the "*Child's Universalist Gazette.*" We designed a full notice of it, but for the want of room can barely say it is published monthly, at No. 43 Washington-st. Boston, at $1 per ann. and is edited by Br. D. D. Smith. An extract from it may be found on our last page. We shall endeavor to give attention to it again.

## To Correspondents.

The communication from H——, is received.

The extreme length of the sermon inserted this week and a desire to get it all in one number, together with the fact that other copy was previously in hand and our work somewhat behind, has compelled us though reluctantly to omit Br. Fuller's article till next week.

"I. M. C." and another Address before the Young Men's Institute will also appear next week.

## Died,

In New-York, on Sunday 1st inst. ORRAVILLE, infant daughter of Mr. Isaiah Parker.

In New-York, on Tuesday last, 3d inst. THADDEUS SEYMOUR, Esq. aged 59 years. The manner of his death was no less sudden and unexpected to himself than painful to his numerous connexions and friends. He was passing through East-Broadway in his carriage, as we understand, when another carriage struck his in passing, which started his horse so suddenly as to throw him out, and some distance from his carriage. He fell on his head, and was taken up insensible, and so remained till he expired, which was in about two hours from the time of the accident. We have barely room now to say, that Mr. Seymour was a most estimable and valuable citizen, commanding universal respect and friendship, wherever known. He was a christian in the fullest sense of the term. His loss will be deeply deplored by the 2d Universalist Society with which he was connected. A more particular Obituary will probably be given hereafter.

## Religious Notices.

Br. Le Fevre will preach at Newark the 2d Sabbath in February, (to morrow;) and Br. Hitchcock will supply his desk in this city.

Br. F. Hitchcock will preach in Goshen, Ct. the last Sunday in February

Br. Case will preach in Saugatuck, Feb. 15th.

Original.

## A PARODY.

*"Will the creeds of men change the character of God, or make void His oaths?"*

O no! I never mention *Him*
But *love* doth sweet accord,
Where'er I cast my longing eyes,
His *goodness* shines abroad.
From *fear* to *fear*, some hurry me,
That I may e'en regret,
That I no more His *vengeance* dread—
Think they that He'll *forget?*

They bid me shun in change of *views*,
The *wrath* that others see;
But were I to adopt *their creed*,
A *woful* child I'd be;
'Tis true, I fear *no more*, that I
*Eternal ire* shall meet,
I *know* God *loves* His creatures well,
And never WILL *forget!*

They call me *sinner, devil!* now,
I heed not what they say;
I have *His sure*, and *certain* vow,
To bear me safe away.
My *Bible* tells me "*God is love*,"
Why then should I regret?
His *power* is great—His *promise sure*;
He never CAN *forget!* I. M. C.

Philadelphia, Jan. 1835.

[In a brief notice of a little volume of Poems by Miss *Lucretia Maria Davidson*, recently published, the editor of the New-Yorker introduces the extract below in the following language:—"Superadded to the interest of these beautiful 'buddings of the soul' as poetical effusions, there is throughout a triumphant and immortal sublimity of mind, tending so directly heavenward, and so pure and etherealized that we seem listening to the accents of some angelic spirit 'midway on the mount,' tuning her delicate harp to the harmonious numbers of her softly murmuring lay. A soul so exquisitely sensitive, too, that a note of music would sometimes sweep across the chords of her heart with an effect so powerful as to still its earthly throbs, and almost separate the spirit from its tenement. Let us permit the fair songstress to describe her own emotions, in a few lines addressed to her sister—written in her fifteenth year."]

## TO MY SISTER.

When evening spreads her shades around,
And darkness fills the arch of Heaven;
When not a murmur, not a sound,
To Fancy's sportive ear is given;

When the broad orb of Heaven is bright
And looks around with golden eye;
When Nature softened by her light,
Seems calmly, solemnly to die;

Then, when our thoughts are raised above
This world, and all this world can give;
Oh, Sister, sing the song I love,
And tears of gratitude receive.

The song which thrills my bosom's core,
And heaving, trembles, half afraid;
O Sister, sing the song *once* more,
Which ne'er for mortal ear was made.

Twere almost sacrilege to sing
Those notes amid the glare of day;
Notes borne by angel's purest wing,
And wafted by their breath away.

When sleeping in my grass-grown bed,
Should'st thou *still* linger here above,
Wilt thou not kneel beside my head,
And, Sister, sing the song I love?—

## VALUE OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

BY T. FLINT.

For myself I feel that I am immortal, and that those fellow sojourners, to whom I have been attached by the affection of long intimacy, and the reception of many and great kindnesses, will exist with me hereafter. I pretend to conceive nothing, I wish to inquire nothing, about the mode, the place and circumstances. I should as soon think of disturbing myself, by endeavoring to conceive the ideas that might be imparted by a sixth sense. It is sufficient that my heart declares, that a being who has seen this glorious world, cherished these warms affections, entertained these illimitable aspirations, felt these longings after immortality, indulged *"these thoughts, that wander through eternity," cannot* have been doomed by Him, who gave them, to have them quenched forever in annihilation. Even an illusion so glorious would be worth purchasing at the price of a world.—I would affirm, even to repetition, that there is given us that high and stern power, which implies a courage superior to any conflict, and which gives the mind a complete ascendency over any danger, pain or torture, which belongs to life or death. But we could not be so extravagant, as for a moment, to question that death, as the present generation have been trained, and as we are accustomed, by all we see, and hear to view it, is a formidable evil, fitly characterized by its dread name, *the king of terrors.* Many a debilitating interior misgiving will assail the stoutest mind, in certain moments, in view of it. There are dark intervals by night, in the midnight hours of pain, periods between the empire of sleep and active reason, when the terrific and formless image rushes in its terror and indefiniteness upon the mind. As age steals upon us, and the vivid perceptions, and the bright dreams of youth disappear, many a dark shadow will cloud the sunshine of the soul.—The conflict, in which all these terrors are overcome by unaided nature and reason is, as has been seen, a cruel one. The tender sensibilities, the keen affections, the dear and delusive hopes of our nature must all be crushed, before we can be unmoved in the endurance of the pain and torture that precedes, and the death that follows.

It is only to a firm and unhesitating faith, that it becomes as easy and natural to die, as to sleep. Glorious and blessed hope, the hope of meeting our friends, in the eternal land of those who truly and greatly live forever! There we shall renew our youth, and *mount as on the wings of eagles.*

"But we shall meet, but we shall meet,
Where parting tears shall cease to flow;
And, when I think thereon, almost I long to go!"

## THE HARP OF THE MIND.

The cultivated mind is much like a beautiful instrument curiously strung with a pleasing variety of chords, the principal of which are knowledge, faith, hope, and charity: when these are all in sweet tune with each other, let goodness of thought and action, with skilful hand, softly touch the strings and pervade the soul, and it wakes up the purest tones of heavenly music in the heart.

Yet this same beautifully organized instrument, the mind, which, with parental care, the wise Builder has made susceptible of the sweetest music and the purest pleasure, is, likewise, capable of giving the harshest and most grating sounds, and of feeling the most acute distress from the baneful effects of wickedness.

It is sin that throws the mind into such painful discords—it is the evil passions which break the tender strings, and slacken the finer and more tender emotions of the heart—it is vice that deadens the lively and sweet vibrations of the soul—it is a long course of wickedness that breaks string after string, until the heart is left without a single chord, on which the music of peace and bliss can be made.

See you that beautiful harp, curiously wrought, finely strung, and harmoniously tuned? What sweet, enchanting notes once breathed from it; but see again—'tis broken—its elegance and beauty are defaced, its tuneful strings are snapped asunder—it is a mere wreck; for a rude savage found it, and tore it in pieces.

How true an emblem this is of that cultivated mind, where pure principles once reigned—which was once the seat of noble and heaven-born virtues, and a soul breathing nought but such beautiful emanations, now deadened—its music now silenced, and lost in the discordant notes of wickedness, and its beautiful features now stamped with the odious image of sin.

The mind is a more delicate instrument than any which can be wrought by human invention, and it is worthy of more constant care. The musician is very careful of his favorite instrument, and preserves it from every danger and exposure. How much more careful then ought the youth to be of the harp of the soul. To keep that from the rude hand of sin, and to keep it in such sweet and peaceful tune, that it may breathe no other strains than those of virtue, is of great importance to them.

Then listen to the voice of wisdom—"keep thy heart with all dilligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Let thy conduct through life be such as shall be acceptable and pleasing to Him who is the giver of every blessing, and let the chords of thy soul, knowledge, faith, hope, and charity, be kept in harmony, and your's will be the sweetest music of bliss in life, and the purest joy and peace in death.—*Child's Universalist Gazette.*


## Universalist Books,

*Which may be obtained of A. C. Thomas, 132 Chesnut-street Philadelphia.*

Balfour's First Inquiry—being a faithful examination of all the passages in the Bible in which the word Hell occurs—$1.

Balfour's Second Inquiry—being an examination of the Scriptural doctrine concerning the devil, and the import of the words translated everlasting, eternal, forever, &c.—$1.

Balfour's Essays on the state of the dead, and inquiries into the meaning of the words judge, damn, condemn, and their derivatives—$1.

Balfour's Examination of Stuart's Exegetical Essays—75cts.

Balfour's Letters to Professor Stuart—25 cts. In this work the author has shown that his conversion to Universalism is mainly attributable to the Professor's criticisms on portions of the Bible.

Balfour's Letter in Reply to Dr. Allen's Lecture against Universal Salvation—25 cts.

Balfour's Letter to Whitman in defence of so much of the First Inquiry as pertains to the term Gehenna—25 cts.

Ballou's Treatise on Atonement—an invaluable work, being an inquiry into the origin, nature and effects of sin, and of the consequences of the Atonement—50 cts.

Ballou's Notes in illustration of the Parables—75 cts.

Ballou's XXVI Lectures on important doctrines—$1.

Ballou's XXV Select Sermons on various subjects—$1.

Ballou's XI Sermons delivered in Philadelphia—37 cts.

Ballou's Examination of the doctrine of future Punishishment—50 cts.

Ancient History of Universalism, by H. Ballou 2d.—$1.

Modern History of Universalism, by T. Whittemore—$1.

T. Southwood Smith's Treatise on the Divine Government—a work I would not be without for five times the price—75 cts.

Notes and Illustrations of the Parables, by Thomas Whittemore—an admirable and very useful volume—75 cts.

Paige's Selections from Eminent Commentators, showing that the most eminent Partialist critics justify the Universalist's interpretations of nearly every prominent passage in the New Testament—$1.

Life of John Murray—Whittemore's much improved edition, 50 cts.—do. Marsh, Capen and Lyon's, 46 cts—also an edition at 37 cts.

Winchester's Dialogues on Universal Restoration—63 cts.

R. Streeter's Familiar Conversations on the doctrine and tendency of Universalism—a fine work—50 cts.

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Universalist Expositor—critical and explanatory—3 volumes $2, 50 each.

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Christian Messenger, vols. I and II bound—$4 for the set.

Christian Messenger, vol. III bound—$2,50.

**Most of the above Books are for Sale, Wholesale and Retail, at No. 3 Chatham-Square, foot of Bowery, New-York.**

## The Prize Tale.

We have just published at this office, in Pamphlet form, the Prize Tale inserted in No. 1 of this vol. $2 50 per 100 37 1-2 cents per doz. Orders solicited.